UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly
Security Council

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GENERAL

A/54/482
S/1999/1076
20 October 1999
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-fourth session
Agenda item 116 (c)
HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATIONS AND REPORTS OF SPECIAL RAPPORTEURS AND REPRESENTATIVES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Letter dated 18 October 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to the statement on the Democratic Republic of Congo issued on 11 October 1999 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Marjatta RASI
Permanent Representative of Finland
to the United Nations

99-30477 (E) 201099 201099

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Annex

[Original: English and French]

Statement on the Democratic Republic of Congo issued on 11 October 1999 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union

On 16 July 1999, the European Union expressed its willingness to support the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement (S/1999/815, annex) provided that the parties themselves complied with the terms thereof. It again declares itself firmly resolved to support implementation of the agreement, in its various components, including the Joint Military Commission and the national dialogue, the peacekeeping operations by the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity, the reintegration of refugees and displaced people in their countries of origin and the process of democratization, rehabilitation and reconstruction in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The European Union remains concerned at the slow pace at which the main provisions of the Lusaka Agreement are being applied and at which the bodies and mechanisms for implementing it are being established. It urges the parties to support this fragile peace process and to avoid returning to conflict.

The European Union welcomes the fact that the first meeting of the Joint Military Commission, a key element of the Lusaka Agreement, is to be held on 11 October 1999 and is considering the possibility of providing it with financial support as soon as it is able to function.

UNITED
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Security Council

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GENERAL

S/1999/1077
20 October 1999
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

LETTER DATED 20 OCTOBER 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to inform you that at 1300 hours on 3 October 1999, Kuwaiti naval forces committed acts of piracy against three Iraqi boats that were putting out to sea from Khawr al-Zubayr. The boats were detained and taken to Kuwaiti ports.

I request you to intervene with Kuwait in order to ensure that those boats are returned forthwith and that there is no repetition of such provocative acts, which are in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the provisions of international law. The Republic of Iraq affirms its right to seek compensation for the damage caused by such acts of aggression, in accordance with the principle of international responsibility.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Saeed H. HASAN
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

99-30586 (E) 211099 211099

UNITED
NATIONS

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Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1999/1078
21 October 1999
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

Draft resolution

The Security Council,

Reaffirming all its relevant resolutions, in particular resolutions 1159 (1998) of 27 March 1998, 1201 (1998) of 15 October 1998 and 1230 (1999) of 26 February 1999,

Noting with satisfaction the successful conclusion of the presidential elections held on 19 September 1999,

Commending the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA) and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the support provided to the electoral process,

Affirming the commitment of all States to respect the sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of the Central African Republic,

Welcoming the report of the Secretary-General of 7 October 1999 (S/1999/1038), and noting with approval the recommendations contained therein,

Recalling the importance of the process of national reconciliation, and urging all the political forces of the Central African Republic to continue their efforts towards cooperation and understanding,

Emphasizing the necessity of proceeding speedily to the restructuring of the Central African armed forces (FACA),

Reaffirming the importance of regional stability and of the consolidation of the climate of peace in the Central African Republic, which constitutes an essential element for the restoration of peace in the region,

Reaffirming also the link between socio-economic progress and the consolidation of the stability of the Central African Republic,

Recalling the relevant principles contained in the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, adopted on 9 December 1994,

Taking note of the desire expressed by the Government of the Central African Republic for an extension of the presence of MINURCA beyond 15 November 1999,

1. Decides to extend the mandate of MINURCA until 15 February 2000 with a view to ensuring a short and gradual transition from United Nations peacekeeping involvement in the Central African Republic to a post-conflict peace-building presence with the aid of the relevant United Nations agencies and programmes and of the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development;

2. Welcomes the proposal of the Secretary-General in paragraph 58 of his report of 7 October 1999 recommending that the reduction of the military and civilian strength of MINURCA be conducted in three stages;

3. Calls once again upon the Government of the Central African Republic to continue to take tangible measures to implement the political, economic, social and security reforms mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General of 23 February 1998 (S/1998/219) and to honour the commitments set forth, inter alia, in the letter dated 23 January 1999 (S/1999/98, annex) from the President of the Central African Republic addressed to the Secretary-General, and reaffirms the role of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Central African Republic in assisting the promotion of reforms and national reconciliation;

4. Strongly encourages the Government of the Central African Republic to coordinate closely with MINURCA in the progressive transfer of the functions of MINURCA in the security field to the local security and police forces;

5. Calls upon the Government of the Central African Republic to complete, with the advice and technical support of MINURCA, the initial steps of the restructuring programme of the FACA and of the demobilization and reintegration programme of the retired military personnel, appeals to the international community to give its support to these programmes, and welcomes the proposal of the Secretary-General to convene a meeting in New York in the coming months to solicit funds in order to finance these programmes;

6. Welcomes the proposal of the Secretary-General to despatch a small multidisciplinary mission to Bangui in order to examine, in accordance with the wishes expressed by the Government of the Central African Republic, the conditions for the maintenance of the United Nations presence beyond 15 February 2000 in accordance with the recommendations made by the Secretary-General and contained in his reports of 30 May 1999 (S/1999/621) and 7 October 1999, and requests the Secretary-General to inform the Council as soon as possible concerning his detailed proposals in this regard;

7. Reaffirms the importance of the role of MINURCA in supervising the destruction of confiscated weapons and ammunition under MINURCA control;

8. Requests the Secretary-General to submit by 15 January 2000 a report on the implementation of the mandate of MINURCA and, in particular, on the progressive transfer of the functions of MINURCA in the security field to the

local security and police forces, on the evolution of the situation in the Central African Republic, on the progress achieved in the implementation of the commitments set forth in the letters dated 8 December 1998 (S/1999/116, annex) and 23 January 1999 from the President of the Central African Republic addressed to the Secretary-General, and on the implementation of the Bangui Agreements and the National Reconciliation Pact, including the commitments relating to economic recovery, the restructuring of the security forces and the functioning of the Special Force for the Defence of the Republican Institutions (FORSDIR);

9. Decides to remain actively seized of the matter.

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NATIONS

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Security Council

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GENERAL

S/1999/1079
21 October 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 18 OCTOBER 1999 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to inform you that, having completed the usual consultations, it is my intention to appoint Dieter Boden (Germany) as my Special Representative for Georgia and Head of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG).

Mr. Boden, who will take up his responsibilities shortly, will succeed Liviu Bota in these functions. I wish to take this opportunity to place on record my deep appreciation of Mr. Bota's dedication in carrying out his duties in Georgia over the past four years.

I should be grateful if you would bring this matter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kofi A. ANNAN

99-30762 (E) 211099

UNITED
NATIONS

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Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1999/1080
21 October 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 21 OCTOBER 1999 FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to inform you that your letter, dated 18 October 1999 (S/1999/1079), concerning your intention to appoint Dieter Boden (Germany) as your Special Representative for Georgia and Head of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) has been brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council. They take note of the intention contained in your letter.

(Signed) Sergey V. LAVROV
President of the Security Council

99-30768 (E) 211099

UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/54/485
S/1999/1081
21 October 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-fourth session
Agenda items 43, 44 and 89
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST
QUESTION OF PALESTINE
REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO
INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES
AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE
PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER ARABS
OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Letter dated 21 October 1999 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Israel, the occupying Power, continues to pursue its illegal settlement activities, including the establishment of new settlements, the enlargement of existing ones and the additional confiscation of Palestinian land. Such a policy and actions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, are illegal, violate relevant United Nations Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, and directly threaten the peace process, its integrity and its chances for success.

Last week, the Israeli government took a decision related to the so-called hilltop settlements, which were established by Jewish settlers, after the signing of the Wye River Memorandum, with the complicity of the authorities of the occupying Power. That decision, while removing some of those hilltop settlements, effectively means that the government is proceeding with the establishment of 32 new settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem. In addition, the government continues to issue tenders for the construction of additional housing units in the existing settlements, including at Jabal Abu Ghneim and even in the Gaza Strip.

Further, on 26 September 1999, the Israeli occupying army confiscated massive areas of land for the so-called "military training". These included 10,000 dunums (2,470 acres) around Izna and 13,000 dunums (3,213 acres) around Beit Awla, both in the southern West Bank. Other confiscation took place in

connection with the building of more so-called bypass roads for use by the Jewish settlers.

It is very unfortunate that all of the above is happening at a time when some hope has been emerging with regard to implementation of the Sharm el-Sheikh Memorandum. We strongly believe that this peace process cannot proceed to a successful conclusion while the occupying Power continues its campaign of settlements as it strives for the colonization of Palestinian land from which Israel must withdraw in implementation of Security Council resolution 242 (1967), which is the aim of the Middle East peace process.

I would be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under items 43, 44 and 89 of the agenda of the fifty-fourth session, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nasser AL-KIDWA
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine
to the United Nations

UNITED NATIONS

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General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/54/488
S/1999/1082
21 October 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-fourth session
Agenda item 76
General and complete disarmament

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Identical letters dated 11 October 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Mozambique to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the SADC Council Decisions on the Prevention and Combating of Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and Related Crimes, adopted at the Summit of the Heads of State or Government of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), held at Maputo on 17 and 18 August 1999 (see annex).

I would highly appreciate it if you could circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 76 and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Carlos Dos SANTOS
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative to the United Nations

99-30790 (E) 231099

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Annex

SADC Council Decisions, 13-14 August 1999: Prevention and Combating of Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and Related Crimes

The Council noted that conflicts in the SADC region over many years have led to a proliferation of arms, including light weapons. This has in turn contributed to an increase in criminal activities such as armed robberies and illicit trafficking in small arms.

The Council noted the various arrangements for combating illicit arms trafficking and cross-border crime. These include the Regional Agreement for Cooperation and Law Enforcement and the establishment of the Southern African Regional Police Cooperation (SARPCCO).

The Council noted that these developments would require a well-coordinated framework in SADC. A developmental dimension to the problem was required over and above a focus on law enforcement.

It was further agreed that small arms was a simple means for promoting crime. SADC needed to combine regional energies and resources to prevent resorting to small arms as a means of survival.

Bearing in mind the above, the following steps were approved by the Council:

- SADC should commit itself to the effective combating of armed transborder crime and the reduction and control of the flow of illicit arms;

- SADC should establish a regional policy for control of small arms and light weapons. SARPCCO should be appointed as the implementing agency of the SADC policy on small arms and cross-border crime prevention. The ministries responsible for law and order or safety should be the SADC national focal points on the issues of prevention and combating of small arms and related crimes.

A working group consisting of Mozambique, South Africa, Swaziland (Chair), Zambia, Zimbabwe, the Secretariat and SARPCCO should be appointed to work out the SADC policy on small arms and develop a programme for implementation at the regional level. Other member States wishing to join the working group may do so.

UNITED
NATIONS

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Security Council

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GENERAL

S/1999/1083
25 October 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Brazil, Canada, France, Namibia, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America: draft resolution

The Security Council,

Recalling its previous resolutions and the statements of its President on the situation in East Timor, in particular resolutions 384 (1975) of 22 December 1975, 389 (1976) of 22 April 1976, 1236 (1999) of 7 May 1999, 1246 (1999) of 11 June 1999, 1262 (1999) of 27 August 1999 and 1264 (1999) of 15 September 1999,

Recalling also the Agreement between Indonesia and Portugal on the question of East Timor of 5 May 1999 and the Agreements between the United Nations and the Governments of Indonesia and Portugal of the same date regarding the modalities for the popular consultation of the East Timorese through a direct ballot and security arrangements (S/1999/513, annexes I to III),

Reiterating its welcome for the successful conduct of the popular consultation of the East Timorese people of 30 August 1999, and taking note of its outcome through which the East Timorese people expressed their clear wish to begin a process of transition under the authority of the United Nations towards independence, which it regards as an accurate reflection of the views of the East Timorese people,

Welcoming the decision of the Indonesian People's Consultative Assembly on 19 October 1999 concerning East Timor,

Stressing the importance of reconciliation among the East Timorese people,

Commending the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET) for the admirable courage and determination shown in the implementation of its mandate,

Welcoming the deployment of a multinational force to East Timor pursuant to resolution 1264 (1999), and recognizing the importance of continued cooperation between the Government of Indonesia and the multinational force in this regard,

Noting the report of the Secretary-General of 4 October 1999 (S/1999/1024),

Noting with satisfaction the successful outcome of the trilateral meeting held on 28 September 1999, as outlined in the report of the Secretary-General,

Deeply concerned by the grave humanitarian situation resulting from violence in East Timor and the large-scale displacement and relocation of East Timorese civilians, including large numbers of women and children,

Reaffirming the need for all parties to ensure that the rights of refugees and displaced persons are protected, and that they are able to return voluntarily in safety and security to their homes,

Reaffirming respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Indonesia,

Noting the importance of ensuring the security of the boundaries of East Timor, and noting in this regard the expressed intention of the Indonesian authorities to cooperate with the multinational force deployed pursuant to resolution 1264 (1999) and with the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor,

Expressing its concern at reports indicating that systematic, widespread and flagrant violations of international humanitarian and human rights law have been committed in East Timor, stressing that persons committing such violations bear individual responsibility, and calling on all parties to cooperate with investigations into these reports,

Recalling the relevant principles contained in the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel adopted on 9 December 1994,

Determining that the continuing situation in East Timor constitutes a threat to peace and security,

Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations,

1. Decides to establish, in accordance with the report of the Secretary-General, a United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), which will be endowed with overall responsibility for the administration of East Timor and will be empowered to exercise all legislative and executive authority, including the administration of justice;

2. Decides also that the mandate of UNTAET shall consist of the following elements:

(a) to provide security and maintain law and order throughout the territory of East Timor;

(b) to establish an effective administration;

(c) to assist in the development of civil and social services;

(d) to ensure the coordination and delivery of humanitarian assistance, rehabilitation and development assistance;

(e) to support capacity-building for self-government;

(f) to assist in the establishment of conditions for sustainable development;

3. Decides further that UNTAET will have objectives and a structure along the lines set out in part IV of the report of the Secretary-General, and in particular that its main components will be:

(a) a governance and public administration component, including an international police element with a strength of up to 1,640 officers;

(b) a humanitarian assistance and emergency rehabilitation component;

(c) a military component, with a strength of up to 8,950 troops and up to 200 military observers;

4. Authorizes UNTAET to take all necessary measures to fulfil its mandate;

5. Recognizes that, in developing and performing its functions under its mandate, UNTAET will need to draw on the expertise and capacity of Member States, United Nations agencies and other international organizations, including the international financial institutions;

6. Welcomes the intention of the Secretary-General to appoint a Special Representative who, as the Transitional Administrator, will be responsible for all aspects of the United Nations work in East Timor and will have the power to enact new laws and regulations and to amend, suspend or repeal existing ones;

7. Stresses the importance of cooperation between Indonesia, Portugal and UNTAET in the implementation of this resolution;

8. Stresses the need for UNTAET to consult and cooperate closely with the East Timorese people in order to carry out its mandate effectively with a view to the development of local democratic institutions, including an independent East Timorese human rights institution, and the transfer to these institutions of its administrative and public service functions;

9. Requests UNTAET and the multinational force deployed pursuant to resolution 1264 (1999) to cooperate closely with each other, with a view also to the replacement as soon as possible of the multinational force by the military component of UNTAET, as notified by the Secretary-General having consulted the leadership of the multinational force, taking into account conditions on the ground;

10. Reiterates the urgent need for coordinated humanitarian and reconstruction assistance, and calls upon all parties to cooperate with humanitarian and human rights organizations so as to ensure their safety, the protection of civilians, in particular children, the safe return of refugees and displaced persons and the effective delivery of humanitarian aid;

11. Welcomes the commitment of the Indonesian authorities to allow the refugees and displaced persons in West Timor and elsewhere in Indonesia to choose whether to return to East Timor, remain where they are or be resettled in other parts of Indonesia, and stresses the importance of allowing full, safe and unimpeded access by humanitarian organizations in carrying out their work;

12. Stresses that it is the responsibility of the Indonesian authorities to take immediate and effective measures to ensure the safe return of refugees in West Timor and other parts of Indonesia to East Timor, the security of refugees, and the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and settlements, in particular by curbing the violent and intimidatory activities of the militias there;

13. Welcomes the intention of the Secretary-General to establish a Trust Fund available for, inter alia, the rehabilitation of essential infrastructure, including the building of basic institutions, the functioning of public services and utilities, and the salaries of local civil servants;

14. Encourages Member States and international agencies and organizations to provide personnel, equipment and other resources to UNTAET as requested by the Secretary-General, including for the building of basic institutions and capacity, and stresses the need for the closest possible coordination of these efforts;

15. Underlines the importance of including in UNTAET personnel with appropriate training in international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law, including child and gender-related provisions, negotiation and communication skills, cultural awareness and civilian-military coordination;

16. Condemns all violence and acts in support of violence in East Timor, calls for their immediate end, and demands that those responsible for such violence be brought to justice;

17. Decides to establish UNTAET for an initial period until 31 January 2001;

18. Requests the Secretary-General to keep the Council closely and regularly informed of progress towards the implementation of this resolution, including, in particular, with regard to the deployment of UNTAET and possible future reductions of its military component if the situation in East Timor improves, and to submit a report within three months of the date of adoption of this resolution and every six months thereafter;

19. Decides to remain actively seized of the matter.

UNITED NATIONS

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General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/54/489
S/1999/1084
22 October 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-fourth session
Agenda items 20, 105 and 110
STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, INCLUDING SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FIRST UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY (1997-2006)
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTCOME OF THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Letter dated 22 October 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to forward the attached press release issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea on 21 October 1999 on the deportation of ethnic Eritreans by the Ethiopian Government through the war zone in defiance of the arrangements made by the International Committee of the Red Cross.

I should be grateful if you would kindly circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 20, 105 and 110, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Haile MENKERIOS
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Press release: Tigray People's Liberation Front deports ethnic Eritreans through war zone in defiance of arrangements made by the International Committee of the Red Cross

The Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) regime rounded up 1,300 ethnic Eritreans in Addis Ababa yesterday evening and loaded them on 29 buses for deportation through the war zone. According to the office of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Addis Ababa, the deportees are likely to be dumped at the Burie Front tomorrow night.

The TPLF regime is perpetrating this act precisely at a time when ICRC has been conducting discussions with both Governments on a scheme for airlifting the deportees. This has become necessary because the usual exit points through which TPLF has deported the 63,000 ethnic Eritreans at previous times are not safe or accessible anymore owing to heightened tension. (Many of the deportees are also critically ill.) The fact is TPLF has virtually completed its preparations and seems set to launch an all-out offensive any day now.

The underlying motive to deport these people at this time is in itself suspect as these people were evicted from their homes and businesses more than six months ago. TPLF has refused to let them go before, claiming that the exit points in the border areas "are insecure".

The callous act by TPLF, which may endanger the lives of these helpless deportees, is a vivid illustration of its disrespect of human life and international law. It also illustrates the contempt with which it holds the international community. Indeed, the Ethiopian Prime Minister had assured the ICRC President during his visit to Addis Ababa in August that his regime "would refrain from further deportations". And only last week, the Joint Assembly of the Group of African, Caribbean and Pacific States and the European Union called upon "the Council of the European Union to prevail upon Ethiopia to accept and implement the peace package of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) *and prevent the continued violation of the human rights of ethnic Eritreans in Ethiopia*".

On the other hand, it is clear that Ethiopia has continued to perpetrate these violations with impunity because international reaction has been feeble throughout.

But the present act should not be tolerated. The safety of the deportees is at great risk as they may be caught in crossfire that TPLF may provoke or other hazards of war.

The international community must therefore prevail upon Ethiopia and demand, in strong and clear terms, that it rescind this action and ensure that these people are deported safely through the arrangements that ICRC has been working on. The Government of Eritrea will, as always, receive its nationals but the TPLF regime shall assume responsibility for any consequences that may ensue.

UNITED
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General Assembly
Security Council

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A/54/489*
S/1999/1084*
27 October 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-fourth session
Agenda items 20, 111 and 116
STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, INCLUDING SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE
REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES, QUESTIONS RELATING TO REFUGEES, RETURNEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS AND HUMANITARIAN QUESTIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Letter dated 22 October 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

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I should be grateful if you would kindly circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 20, 111 and 116, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Haile MENKERIOS
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* Reissued for technical reasons.

Annex

Press release: Tigray People's Liberation Front deports ethnic Eritreans through war zone in defiance of arrangements made by the International Committee of the Red Cross

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The TPLF regime is perpetrating this act precisely at a time when ICRC has been conducting discussions with both Governments on a scheme for airlifting the deportees. This has become necessary because the usual exit points through which TPLF has deported the 63,000 ethnic Eritreans at previous times are not safe or accessible anymore owing to heightened tension. (Many of the deportees are also critically ill.) The fact is TPLF has virtually completed its preparations and seems set to launch an all-out offensive any day now.

The underlying motive to deport these people at this time is in itself suspect as these people were evicted from their homes and businesses more than six months ago. TPLF has refused to let them go before, claiming that the exit points in the border areas "are insecure".

The callous act by TPLF, which may endanger the lives of these helpless deportees, is a vivid illustration of its disrespect of human life and international law. It also illustrates the contempt with which it holds the international community. Indeed, the Ethiopian Prime Minister had assured the ICRC President during his visit to Addis Ababa in August that his regime "would refrain from further deportations". And only last week, the Joint Assembly of the Group of African, Caribbean and Pacific States and the European Union called upon "the Council of the European Union to prevail upon Ethiopia to accept and implement the peace package of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) *and prevent the continued violation of the human rights of ethnic Eritreans in Ethiopia*".

On the other hand, it is clear that Ethiopia has continued to perpetrate these violations with impunity because international reaction has been feeble throughout.

But the present act should not be tolerated. The safety of the deportees is at great risk as they may be caught in crossfire that TPLF may provoke or other hazards of war.

The international community must therefore prevail upon Ethiopia and demand, in strong and clear terms, that it rescind this action and ensure that these people are deported safely through the arrangements that ICRC has been working on. The Government of Eritrea will, as always, receive its nationals but the TPLF regime shall assume responsibility for any consequences that may ensue.

UNITED NATIONS **A S**

General Assembly
Security Council

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A/54/493
S/1999/1085
22 October 1999
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-fourth session
Agenda item 116 (c)
HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATIONS AND REPORTS OF SPECIAL RAPPORTEURS AND REPRESENTATIVES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Letter dated 20 October 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw to your attention to the statement by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union on the killing of members of a humanitarian mission in Burundi, issued on 18 October 1999 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would arrange for the text of this letter and its annex to be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 116 (c) and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Marjatta RASI
Permanent Representative of Finland
to the United Nations

Annex

[Original: English and French]

Statement on the killing of members of a humanitarian mission in Burundi issued on 18 October 1999 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union

The European Union strongly condemns the renewed outbreak of indiscriminate violence in Burundi, the main victims of which continue to be the people of that country.

The European Union is particularly outraged at and condemns the attack on a humanitarian mission in Rutana province on Tuesday, 12 October. It is shocked by the massacre of several members of that mission, Burundians and expatriates, including two representatives of United Nations agencies, and offers its condolences to the victims' families.

It calls for the perpetrators of this massacre to be brought to justice.

The European Union wishes to make a further, urgent appeal to all the Burundian parties to put an end without delay to all acts of violence and to reach an early agreement on the terms of a ceasefire and a return to civil peace, reconciliation and democracy in Burundi.

The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, the associated countries Cyprus and Malta and the European Free Trade Association countries members of the European Economic Area align themselves with the present statement.

UNITED
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Security Council

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GENERAL

S/1999/1086
23 October 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 22 OCTOBER 1999 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

In several of my reports to the Security Council on the humanitarian programme in Iraq pursuant to resolution 986 (1995), including my latest report (S/1999/896 and Corr. 1), I have expressed concern about delays in the approval of applications submitted to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 661 (1990). In particular, I have referred to the growing number of holds placed on applications and the resultant serious implications for the implementation of the humanitarian programme.

In this connection, I attach, for the information of the members of the Security Council, a note addressed to me by the Executive Director of the Iraq Programme. As indicated in that note, the number of holds placed on applications by the Security Council Committee has continued to increase in the two-month period that has passed since the submission of my last report to the Council, on 19 August 1999.

To enable the Iraq Programme to meet the humanitarian objectives set forth in resolutions 986 (1995) and 1153 (1998) it is highly desirable to find a prompt solution to this problem. To this effect, I believe it would be very helpful if the Committee could undertake an early review of all applications currently on hold with a view to expediting a decision, as appropriate, in each case.

(Signed) Kofi A. ANNAN

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Annex

Note dated 22 October 1999 addressed to the Secretary-General by the Executive Director of the Iraq Programme

Holds on applications

In your most recent report to the Security Council on the humanitarian programme in Iraq pursuant to Security Council resolution 986 (1995), submitted on 19 August 1999, you stated that there had been a significant increase in the number of holds being placed on applications, with serious implications for the implementation of the humanitarian programme; you also recommended that an all-out effort be made to review further all the holds concerned and to expedite the approval of applications, in order to ensure the timely and effective implementation of the programme (S/1999/896 and Corr.1, para. 101).

While some effort has been made recently by members of the Security Council Committee established by resolution 661 (1990) in lifting holds on drought-related applications, as well as for applications related to water and sanitation and oil spare parts, the number of holds overall continues to increase. Since your report to the Security Council of 19 August 1999, the number of holds on applications has increased from 475 (total value about $500 million) to 572 (total value about $700 million). As at 12 October 1999, for example, 23.7 per cent of applications circulated under phase V had been placed on hold. There is a high level of holds on applications circulated under phase V for telecommunications (100 per cent), electricity (65.5 per cent), water and sanitation (53.4 per cent) and oil spare parts and equipment (43 per cent). It is also noted that the time required by members of the Committee to review holds is becoming longer, on average 34 days.

It is, of course, well understood that with large-scale and complex contracts, in particular those involving infrastructure, more time is needed by members of the Committee to consult with their authorities and to review applications circulated by the Office of the Iraq Programme for their consideration and approval.

Nonetheless, unless immediate measures are taken by all concerned, including both the Committee and the Government of Iraq, the serious difficulties already being experienced in the implementation of the programme will be exacerbated.

Accordingly, the Office of the Iraq Programme has further intensified its efforts to assist the Committee in carrying out its responsibilities for a thorough and timely review of applications circulated. The information the Office seeks to provide, in consultation with all concerned parties, includes priorities, interrelated and time-sensitive applications, required delivery dates, potential dual-use items and spare parts and any additional information which might be useful to the Committee in its consideration of applications.

As requests by members of the Committee for additional technical details account for almost half the applications placed on hold, we have just finalized

guidelines to assist applicants in providing more details prior to circulation and consideration of applications by the Committee. Early provision of detailed technical information by the Government of Iraq and its suppliers could contribute to reducing the number and duration of holds.

The second most common reason given for holds relates to concerns about end users. In accordance with the purposes set out in paragraph 4 of resolution 1153 (1998), we have sought to deploy the United Nations observers in Iraq in such a way as to provide, to the extent possible, the required assurances to the Committee that all supplies authorized for procurement, including potential dual-use items, are indeed utilized for the purpose for which they have been authorized. In addition to keeping the Committee fully informed on a regular basis of the status of holds on applications, we have arranged briefings by experts in order to provide additional clarifications and/or technical advice.

Another serious issue occurs when an application or a number of interrelated or complementary applications have been approved by the Committee, and the related supplies and spare parts or equipment have arrived in Iraq but are then kept in storage for an extended period because another interrelated or complementary application is on hold. The absence of a single item of equipment, sometimes insignificant in size or value, can be sufficient to prevent the completion of an entire project.

In consultation with the Government of Iraq, the United Nations Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator in Iraq and the United Nations agencies and programmes concerned, we have been reviewing the inventory of supplies and equipment in government warehouses, provided under the programme, in order to identify items that have arrived in Iraq but cannot be utilized because of holds on complementary inputs, thus causing delays in the implementation of specific activities or projects.

It is evident that efforts by the members of the Security Council Committee and the Secretariat alone will not be sufficient to resolve the difficulties being experienced at present. A special effort is also needed on the part of the Government of Iraq as well as its suppliers in providing the detailed information required by the Committee in a timely manner.

We will continue to consult with the Government of Iraq with a view to presenting requirements on the basis of interlinked projects rather than general allocations for each sector. This was the approach proposed in your supplementary report to the Security Council of 1 February 1998 (S/1998/90) and subsequently endorsed in paragraph 5 of resolution 1153 (1998). As noted in paragraph 23 of the report, in many sectors the underlying procurement framework of the distribution plans has not fostered an approach where humanitarian problems have been addressed by a corresponding project to target appropriate resources.

In this context, I have requested the Government to inform the Office of the Iraq Programme as soon as interrelated contracts relating to the same project are concluded between the Government and its suppliers so that the Office can present those applications to the Committee in a manner which makes clear the linkages between the different items being procured.

I have also requested that the Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator in Iraq, in consultation with the Government of Iraq and the United Nations agencies and programmes, provide the Office of the Iraq Programme, on a regular basis, with detailed reports on the impact of holds on the implementation of the programme. This has been requested in the past but takes on particular urgency and importance given the current level of holds. The Office of the Iraq Programme will submit those reports to the Committee.

While remaining realistic about the prospects for significant improvement in the current situation, I believe it would be important for the Security Council and its Committee to keep under constant review, in as flexible and pragmatic a manner as possible, all procedures and activities regarding the implementation of the programme, in order to resolve any difficulties faced in the implementation process.

(Signed) Benon V. SEVAN
Executive Director
Office of the Iraq Programme

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Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1999/1087
22 October 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL CONCERNING THE SITUATION IN ABKHAZIA, GEORGIA

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 1255 (1999) of 30 July 1999, the Security Council decided to extend the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) until 31 January 2000, subject to a review by the Council of the mandate of UNOMIG in the event of any changes that may be made in the mandate or in the presence of the peacekeeping force of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). It also requested that I continue to keep the Council regularly informed, and that I report on the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia, three months from the date of the adoption of the resolution. The present report describes the situation as at mid-October 1999.

2. Pending the assumption of duty by my new Special Representative for Georgia and Head of UNOMIG, Dieter Boden (see S/1999/1079 and S/1999/1080), Liviu Bota continued to serve in this function on a non-resident basis. In that capacity he visited the mission area from 11 to 17 September. Mr. Bota was assisted in his tasks by the Chief Military Observer, Major General Tariq Waseem Ghazi (Pakistan), who also acted as Officer-in-Charge of the mission in Mr. Bota's absence. The strength of UNOMIG, as at mid-October 1999, stood at 101 military observers (see annex).

II. POLITICAL ASPECTS

3. On 20 September 1999, I discussed important aspects of the peace process, including the political status of Abkhazia, Georgia, with the President of Georgia, Eduard Shevardnadze, who had come to New York to address the General Assembly. The President welcomed the intention of my Special Representative to submit later this year, for the consideration of the two sides, proposals relating to the distribution of constitutional competences between Tbilisi and Sukhumi.

4. The ninth session of the Coordinating Council, which had originally been planned for 30 July, has been postponed indefinitely. During consultations in late July and September, the Georgian side stressed to my Special Representative

that it might be more beneficial to convene the Council at a later time. Meanwhile, the intensity and scope of direct contacts between the Georgian and Abkhaz sides has accelerated, including a meeting in Moscow on 4 August between Georgian State Minister Vazha Lordkipanidze and Abkhaz leader Vladislav Ardzinba, and a meeting in Tbilisi on 21 September between Mr. Lordkipanidze and Anri Jergenia, Personal Representative of Mr. Ardzinba to the peace process. As a result, both sides have reported progress on a draft agreement addressing the return of refugees and internally displaced persons to the Gali district in its old borders and measures for the economic rehabilitation of Abkhazia, Georgia.

5. In mid-September, Mr. Ardzinba wrote to President Shevardnadze to express concern about the possible deterioration of the security situation on the ground. The Georgian side responded readily to Mr. Ardzinba's proposal. Accordingly, the respective heads of the defence, internal affairs and security structures of the two sides met on 21 September in Tbilisi for an open and frank discussion. The Chief Military Observer of UNOMIG and the Commander of the CIS peacekeeping force, Major General Sergei Korobko, also participated in that meeting.

6. On the basis of the discussions held in June 1999 during the Istanbul meeting of the Georgian and Abkhaz sides on confidence-building measures (see S/1999/805, paras. 6 and 7) and following numerous high-level direct telephone contacts, a number of detainees held by each side were exchanged at the main bridge over the Inguri River on 8 September. My Special Representative continues to call on the two sides to effect a full exchange of detainees on an "all-for-all" basis. In the economic and cultural spheres, positive developments during the reporting period included the travel by a group of 20 Georgian and 20 Abkhaz children to summer camp in the United States of America, where I received them in New York on 5 August; the convening of a meeting in Sochi of Georgian and Abkhaz elders and war veterans and the restoration by the Georgiafilm studio of films shot in Abkhazia at various times during the century. In addition, a meeting organized in September in Tbilisi, with the assistance of UNOMIG, brought winemakers from the Georgian and Abkhaz sides close to an agreement on cooperation in the production and sale of wine. It is envisaged that another meeting on confidence-building measures will be convened before the end of the year in Yalta, at the invitation of the Government of Ukraine.

7. Progress in the peace process was slow in part because of the campaign for the Georgian parliamentary elections, scheduled for 31 October.. Furthermore, the Abkhaz side held "presidential elections" on 3 October, in which Mr. Ardzinba ran unopposed. Simultaneously, the Abkhaz held a referendum on the Abkhaz "Constitution" of 26 November 1994. It will be recalled in this connection that the Security Council, in its resolution 1255 (1999), considered "unacceptable and illegitimate the holding of self-styled elections", in the absence of the majority of the population of Abkhazia, Georgia. On 12 October 1999, the Abkhaz de facto parliament adopted a document entitled "Act on State Independence of the Republic of Abkhazia".

III. OPERATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN GEORGIA

8. Since I last reported to the Security Council on 20 July 1999 (see S/1999/805), UNOMIG has continued to carry out its mandate based on the concept of "limited patrolling". The team bases remain closed since the overall situation has still not improved sufficiently to justify a permanent presence in isolated locations. However, the Chief Military Observer is making contingency plans to reoccupy those sites in the Gali and Zugdidi sectors should the current encouraging security trends there continue. Given the recent hostage-taking incident in the Kodori Valley (see para. 18), the team site there will have to remain closed until adequate security measures are in place.

9. UNOMIG has continued to take the lead in the joint investigations of violent incidents. To date, 13 investigations have been conducted in which UNOMIG, the CIS peacekeeping force and/or the respective offices of the Prosecutor on the Georgian and Abkhaz sides were represented. In addition, UNOMIG has facilitated a regular exchange of information between the two offices. Although it is a positive sign that both sides are prepared to work together to improve law enforcement, a formal protocol should be concluded so that this becomes a permanent feature of their relations, rather than one based only on ad hoc decisions.

10. UNOMIG has pursued vigorously the implementation of the agreements on the separation of forces reached at the session of Working Group I of the Coordination Council held in Tbilisi on 25 June 1999 (see S/1999/805, paras. 21 and 22). While the original deadline of 10 July 1999 for carrying out these measures has not been met, the main obligations have by now largely been fulfilled after significant pressure from UNOMIG. As a result, UNOMIG has noticed a steady improvement in mutual confidence between the sides, making direct bilateral contacts at the lower levels possible as well. The outstanding issue of an agreement on acceptable levels of law enforcement personnel within the security zone continues to be pursued and needs to be resolved as soon as possible.

11. The deployment to the Mission in July 1999 of a second helicopter has provided increased capacity for the operational, medical evacuation and administrative needs of UNOMIG and significantly enhanced the flexibility of the Mission's access to remote and hitherto unvisited areas. When one helicopter was damaged and rendered inoperable during the recent hostage-taking incident, the second helicopter proved to be of critical importance.

12. Road resurfacing and bridge repair work in the lower Gali area are continuing. As a result, access to the ceasefire line in this area has improved substantially, which has recently enabled UNOMIG to send ground patrols to villages that had not been visited since December 1998. Further road and bridge repair work is planned, to increase operational access and improve logistic lines between the two sectors by making additional routes available. In addition, new helicopter landing sites have provided greater support for patrols operating in those important areas.

13. Following the relocation of the UNOMIG logistics base headquarters from Pitsunda to Zugdidi, the military personnel of the Zugdidi sector have also moved into the new premises. This has already resulted in improvements to the overall efficiency of the sector and the Mission as a whole.

IV. SITUATION ON THE GROUND

14. The strength of the forces directly confronting each other on both sides of the ceasefire line decreased noticeably during the reporting period. As a result, cross-border firing remained at a very low level in comparison with the situation a year ago. The general level of calm along the line was also facilitated by agreements between lower-level force commanders and local administrators to maintain order, especially during the hazelnut harvest, usually a very tense period. However, as the harvest season drew to a close, several ambushes of Abkhaz security personnel along the ceasefire line were reported.

15. The Georgian armed forces conducted a large-scale live ammunition exercise from 6 to 10 September at the Kulevi Training Area, within and adjacent to the restricted weapons zone. Through the good offices of the Chief Military Observer, they agreed to complete transparency in the planning and execution of the exercise. The Abkhaz authorities reacted by announcing that they would hold their own exercise, also in the Restricted Weapons Zone, but eventually rescinded their decision following the personal intervention of the Chief Military Observer. During these events, the issue of the delineation of the boundaries of the restricted weapons zone was again raised. The Georgian and Abkhaz sides and the Russian Federation as facilitator should provide UNOMIG with authentic maps clearly indicating these boundaries.

16. During the reporting period, there was an increase in the number of violations of the Moscow Agreement (see S/1994/583/Corr.1, annex I). The majority of these continue to relate to the deployment of prohibited small arms on both sides which, however, does not give cause for serious concern. There has also been a slight increase, on both sides of the ceasefire line, in the number of restrictions imposed upon the Mission's freedom of movement and access for UNOMIG patrols. UNOMIG continues to protest about these violations of the Moscow Agreement at appropriate levels, but the general response remains inadequate.

17. Although some attacks on security personnel on both sides did occur over the past months, criminality was the main cause of most of the security-related problems during the reporting period. Most of the violent incidents recorded were assessed to have been carried out by criminal elements motivated by economic gain. On the Abkhaz side, law enforcement structures remain unable to combat either the criminal or the terrorist elements operating in the area, especially in the lower Gali region. The Abkhaz authorities have attempted to extend their authority in the security field by encouraging villages to form self-defence units, composed of local residents armed with their own weapons, which are to be formally registered with the Gali administration. However, such an arrangement places local residents in a difficult position since they generally believe that registering a self-defence unit with the Abkhaz

authorities is likely to provoke negative reactions from "partisan" groups. On the whole, the two sides have so far failed to effectively check, or cooperate in preventing, the activities of criminals and armed groups. The establishment of effective law enforcement throughout the zone of conflict remains a priority task for both sides.

18. The situation in the Kodori Valley had been calm until the kidnapping for ransom by armed individuals of seven UNOMIG personnel on patrol in the Georgian-controlled part of the valley on 13 October 1999. All seven UNOMIG personnel were eventually released unconditionally by 15 October after negotiations led by senior officials of the Government of Georgia. In the aftermath of the incident, doubts were expressed about the jurisdiction of UNOMIG; this issue needs to be resolved expeditiously in order to enable UNOMIG to carry out its mandate without restrictions. A decision on whether to reopen the team base will be taken only after the comprehensive review of the security situation currently under way is completed.

V. SECURITY SITUATION

19. The security and safety of UNOMIG personnel remains one of the Mission's highest priorities. The improvement in road conditions and the introduction of the new helicopter have increased the safety of UNOMIG patrols when deployed in the Gali and Zugdidi sectors.

20. The most serious security-related incident aimed at UNOMIG during the reporting period was the hostage taking of 13 October in the Kodori Valley mentioned above. In addition, a grenade was thrown over the fence of the newly opened Zugdidi office on 26 September 1999; the incident, fortunately, resulted in no casualties and only minor material damage. It was assessed that this was an isolated attack, with no clear motive, and its timing (after midnight) suggests that it was not intended to cause injury to personnel.

21. On several occasions during the reporting period, Georgian local law enforcement officials have responded promptly upon receiving information concerning possible threats to the security of UNOMIG, by informing UNOMIG and offering assistance. The valuable role of the Georgian authorities in resolving the 13 October hostage taking has already been mentioned. Abkhaz law enforcement officials have also been cooperative, particularly in the aftermath of a fatal car accident on 27 September, in which UNOMIG was involved.

VI. COOPERATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN GEORGIA AND THE COLLECTIVE PEACEKEEPING FORCE OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES

22. The working relationship between UNOMIG and the CIS peacekeeping force remains good and close liaison is maintained at all levels. Regular exercises are conducted to maintain a high degree of readiness for security back-up, and information of mutual interest is regularly exchanged. The Commander of the CIS peacekeeping force placed a helicopter and personnel on standby during the recent hostage-taking incident in case assistance would be required.

23. Although it continued to operate primarily from static checkpoints, the CIS peacekeeping force conducted more extensive mobile patrols during the reporting period, particularly in the lower Gali area. It also increased its cooperation with the local forces on both sides of the ceasefire line. With UNOMIG encouragement, the peacekeeping force has been proactive in ensuring that the dismantling of the military positions of the two sides, in accordance with the agreements made on 25 June 1999, was completed satisfactorily, and it has actively participated in joint investigations. Apart from the explosion of an old mine accidentally detonated during the resurfacing of the Tagiloni-Nabakevi road, in which three soldiers and a civilian were injured, the CIS peacekeeping force suffered no casualties during the reporting period.

24. Late in August, the Government of Georgia agreed to support the extension of the mandate of the CIS peacekeeping force for a period of six months. The mandate must still be formally extended by a decision of the CIS heads of State. The Georgian side has expressed its confidence that this step will encourage the peacekeeping force to carry out its mission with more vigour and determination, and there are indications from the CIS peacekeeping force itself that this would indeed be the case.

VII. HUMANITARIAN SITUATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS

25. Recent periods of calm on the ground in the Gali district have had no fundamental effect on the human rights situation. There has been no change in the language policy in the schools with predominantly Georgian-speaking students, where Georgian is taught a limited number of hours and the language of instruction in the first four grades continues to be Russian. Such a policy may encourage members of the local returnee population to remain for now in residence on the Zugdidi side of the ceasefire line. The United Nations Human Rights office in Abkhazia, Georgia, continues to monitor reports from some local residents of apartment evictions and violations of the right of property. The office is energetically pursuing reported cases of harassment through local law enforcement authorities.

26. Visiting Georgia from 4 to 7 September, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Sadako Ogata, expressed dismay about the politicization of the plight of persons displaced from Abkhazia, Georgia, many of whom live in grim conditions. Without backing down from the principle of the imprescriptible right of refugees and displaced persons to return home, she urged President Shevardnadze and the Government of Georgia to do everything in their power to improve conditions for internally displaced persons, and to provide them with the social and legal rights necessary to develop a capacity for self-reliance. While the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) continues its monitoring activities in the Gali district, it will not provide substantial material assistance until the Georgian and Abkhaz sides have concluded agreements which could allow the creation of proper security conditions for return.

27. During the reporting period, feeding and agricultural programmes were carried out by both Acción contra el Hambre and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). In the medical sector, ICRC and Médecins sans

Frontières-France, with some assistance from Première Urgence, and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency, with some help from Counterpart International, provided supplies and conducted training for medical professionals. In the social field, the United Nations Volunteers continue to support the non-governmental organization support centre in Sukhumi; the United Methodist Committee on Relief has expanded the activities of its Youth House Project, with programmes in Tbilisi and Zugdidi, as well as in Sukhumi; and an Abkhaz non-governmental organization, "Peace and Accord", financed by UNHCR, is carrying out psychosocial rehabilitation for vulnerable persons. The Halo Trust has actively continued its mine-clearance and mine-awareness programmes. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs continues to monitor the overall humanitarian situation in Georgia.

VIII. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS

28. The general economic situation in Georgia remained relatively stable during the reporting period, but the economy has not yet recovered from the market slowdown that began in 1998. The exchange rate remains volatile, the export sector remains weak, and the level of investment is still low. One of the greatest difficulties faced by the Government of Georgia - its inability to collect all taxes owed - has resulted in part in the continued delay in payment of salaries and pensions during the reporting period.

29. The socio-economic picture in Abkhazia, Georgia, remains bleak, and without prospects for immediate change. Some of the region is affected again this year by a drought that has reduced the expected harvest. Wage-earning opportunities remain almost non-existent, and the level of petty crime is high. Demographically, the population continues to dwindle, as those with any means or connections seek jobs or education elsewhere.

IX. OBSERVATIONS

30. My recent meeting with President Shevardnadze has reinforced my conviction that, in the search for a comprehensive settlement of the Georgian/Abkhaz dispute, efforts should be strengthened to achieve progress on the core question of the conflict, namely, the political status of Abkhazia. In this regard, my Special Representative will work closely with the Russian Federation, in its capacity as facilitator, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Group of Friends of the Secretary-General before submitting proposals to both sides.

31. The acceleration of bilateral contacts at all levels between the Georgian and Abkhaz sides is a welcome development. The implementation of projects agreed upon at the Athens and Istanbul meetings of the Georgian and Abkhaz sides has built visible bridges in an increasing array of fields and has had a larger resonance through positive coverage by the mass media of both sides. Such efforts should continue. It is envisaged that the next major step could be the convening later this year in Yalta, at the invitation of the Government of Ukraine, of a third meeting on confidence-building measures.

32. Parallel to the increasing bilateral contacts, the established mechanisms of the Geneva process - particularly the Coordinating Council and its working groups - should continue to meet regularly in accordance with their statute, regardless of the constraints of domestic politics. They provide a direct avenue for active participation in the peace process by the international community, on whom the sides can call for support when difficulties are encountered and when agreements are to be implemented.

33. The continuing displacement of thousands of people, years after the end of active hostilities, is especially distressing. The Georgian and Abkhaz sides need to take, in the nearest future, the first concrete step towards the full return to Abkhazia, Georgia, of refugees and internally displaced persons in safe, secure and dignified conditions, by agreeing on and signing a document providing for their return to the Gali district in its old borders and measures for the economic rehabilitation of Abkhazia.

34. While the security situation has slightly improved in the Gali and Zugdidi sectors and the number of incidents there has decreased, the hostage-taking incident of 13 October in the Kodori Valley has once again shown the precariousness of the situation in which UNOMIG operates. The steps taken by the Georgian authorities, which ensured the unconditional release of the hostages were highly appreciated, as was the readiness of the CIS peacekeeping force to help in any way the Chief Military Observer deemed useful. I am confident that the Government of Georgia will take the necessary legal action to bring the perpetrators to justice. UNOMIG is keeping its security arrangements under constant review in order to ensure the highest possible level of security for its staff.

35. As the members of the Security Council are aware, I have now appointed Dieter Boden (Germany) as my Special Representative for Georgia. Mr. Boden will assume his new position in the near future. Until then, I have asked Liviu Bota, who has meanwhile returned to the service of his Government, to continue as my Special Representative, in a non-resident capacity. I am grateful to the Government of Romania for agreeing to this arrangement.

36. I would like to take this opportunity to again pay tribute to the men and women of UNOMIG for their dedication in carrying out the tasks entrusted to them by the Security Council under difficult, and at times dangerous, conditions.

Annex

Composition of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia as at mid-October 1999

Country	Military observers
Albania	1
Austria	5
Bangladesh	7
Czech Republic	4
Denmark	5
Egypt	3
France	3
Germany	10
Greece	4
Hungary	7
Indonesia	4
Jordan	6
Pakistan	6
Poland	4
Republic of Korea	3
Russian Federation	3
Sweden	5
Switzerland	4
Turkey	5
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	7
Uruguay	3
United States of America	2
Total	101

Map No. 3837 Rev. 22 UNITED NATIONS
October 1999

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UNITED
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Security Council

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S/1999/1088
22 October 1999
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

LETTER DATED 21 OCTOBER 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 190th meeting of the Security Council Committee established by resolution 661 (1990) concerning the situation between Iraq and Kuwait, held on 12 October 1999, the representative of the United States in the Committee circulated to members a printed document entitled "Saddam Hussein's Iraq" that contained information and photographs relating to what he termed the policy of expulsion and destruction of homes being pursued by Iraq, Iraq's threats to its neighbours, and Iraq's failure to comply with Security Council resolutions.

The Committee was established by Security Council resolution 661 (1990) of 6 August 1990. In its paragraph 6, the Council specifies the tasks to be assigned to the Committee, and they define exhaustively the modalities for the effective implementation of the resolution's provisions. Accordingly, we consider that, in circulating a document that is not characterized by veracity, the representative of the United States was injecting the Committee into political issues with tendentious objectives. The substance of this dubious document bears no relation to the function of the Committee, and the sole purpose of this action by the United States was therefore to influence the Committee's work in a manner that does not accord with the mandate entrusted to it.

You must know that the American document is full of the lies, allegations, fabrications and worthless sophistries that United States officials have been using against Iraq for several years in the context of a contrived political propaganda campaign, as part of a policy of conspiracy against Iraq's national regime and as a pretext for maintaining a position that is almost unique in its insistence on continuing to afflict the Iraqi people with an unjust embargo that has no justification.

The hostile practices of the United States vis-à-vis Iraq and the contempt it expresses for United Nations committees by attempting to deflect them from the proper exercise of their mandates require that you should put an end to such practices and that you request the Committee to focus in its work on how to simplify its procedures in order to assist the Iraqi people to satisfy its needs and meet its most pressing basic requirements. The United Nations agencies have confirmed this situation, and the most recent position taken in this regard is

that set forth in the UNICEF report of 12 August 1999. The recommendations made therein include a request to the Committee to simplify and expedite the processing of contracts under the memorandum of understanding in order to halt the sharp rise in the infant mortality rate in Iraq, which the report attributes to the economic sanctions imposed on Iraq more than nine years ago.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Saeed H. HASAN
Ambassador
Permanent Representative